

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5018

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, FR

SUBJECT: ALEXANDRE SANGUINETTI FIRED FROM GOVERNMENT POST

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SUMMARY. ALEXANDRE SANGUINETTI, FORMER MINISTER, FORMER SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UDR (GAULLISTS) AND THE UDR'S TOP DEFENSE EXPERT, HAS BEEN FORCED OUT OF THE GOVERNMENT SINCERELY HE HAS HELD SINCE 1973 AS THE RESULT OF HIS SARCASTIC ATTACKS ON GISCARD. GISCARD IS BEING WIDELY REPORTED -- PERHAPS AS THE RESULT OF CAREFULLY PLANNED ELYSEE LEAKS -- AS HAVING PERSONALLY MADE THE DECISIONS. SANGUINETTI'S SIN? STEADFAST OPPOSITION TO GISCARD "ADVANCED LIBERAL SOCIETY," PUBLIC DISAGREEMENT WITH GISCARD AND RIDICULE HEAPED ON THE PRESIDENT. THE CONSEQUENCES ARE LIKELY TO BE MINIMAL: PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC, SANGUINETTI'S FRIEND AND SOMETIME PROTEGE, WAS FORCED TO ANNOUNCE THE NEWS AND TO SWALLOW HIS OWN PRIDE. THE UDR PARLIAMENTARY GROUP IS MUTTERING, BUT SEEMS IMPOTENT. GISCARD EMERGES FROM THE AFFAIR LOOKING LIKE A TOUGHER LEADER WHO HAS TIGHTENED HIS CONTROL BY A POSSIBLY IMPDRTANT BIT. END SUMMARY.

1. SANGUINETTI'S SIN: SPEAKING ON NATIONAL RADIO, SANGUINETTI SAID ON NOVEMBER 1 THAT IN THE LAST PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, "FRANCE HAD NO ONE OF GREAT DIMENSIONS. IT WAS A STRUGGLE OF TWO ONE-EYED MEN AND A BLIND MAN: THERE WAS A ONE-EYED MAN WHOSE EYE WAS BETTER THAN THE OTHER'S -- THAT IS, GISCARD. YOU HAD TO CHOOSE BETWEEN THREE UNSUITABLES - I CHOSE THE UNSUITABLE CALLED GISCARD. WE'LL KNOW AFTER HIS TERM IS OVER AND AFTER HE'S STOPPED COMMEMORATING HIMSELF EVERY 100 DAYS IF IT WAS WORTH IT." SANGUINETTI, LONG KNOWN FOR HIS VITRIOLIC HUMOR AND BITING STYLE, WAS NO DOUBT ECHOING MUCH UDR SENTIMENT, AT LEAST ON THE PART OF THE OLD BARONS OF THE PARTY, BUT GISCARD COULD NOT AFFORD TO IGNORE HIM.

2. THE STAKES: IN 1973, PRESIDENT POMPIDOU AND PRIME MINISTER MESSMER HAD CONFIDED TO SANGUINETTI THE POST OF DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL RESEARCH FOR THE OVERSEAS. THE POST, A SINECURE DESIGNED TO REWARD A FAITHFUL GAULLIST WIDELY ADMIRER IN FRANCE, GAVE "SANGUI" A COMFORTABLE SALARY, CONSIDERABLE OFFICE HELP AND THE LITTLE EMOLUMENTS SO WIDELY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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APPRECIATED BY FRENCH POLITICIANS. HE LOST THE POST ON 24 HOURS NOTICE.

3. THE REACTION: THE UDR, MOST DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY THE MOVE, MAINTAINED A STONY OFFICIAL SILENCE. UDR PARLIAMENTARY GROUP PRESIDENT CLAUDE LABBE, WHILE CONDEMNING SANGUINETTI FOR HIS IRRESPONSIBILITY, NOTED THAT GOVERNMENT POSTS SUCH AS HIS SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AS

REWARDS FOR FAITHFUL SERVICE WHICH THE GOVERNMENT IS FREE TO WITHDRAW "IF YOU MAKE A SLIP." GLEEFULLY JOINING THE FRAY, THE SOCIALISTS WERE LESS KIND AND LINKED THE FIRING TO A PREVIEW OF WHAT GISCARD'S "ADVANCED LIBERAL SOCIETY" ACTUALLY OFFERS TO THE FRENCH.

4. COMMENT: THE FRENCH, WHO TEND TO SEE POLITICS IN VERY PERSONAL TERMS, ARE GENERALLY INCLINED TO EXCUSE THE VOCIFEROUS SANGUINETTI AND TO SEE IN THE AFFAIR ONLY THE INTERPLAY OF PERSONALITIES. THOSE WHO MIGHT BE WILLING TO CONSIDER THE FIRING AN ATTACK ON THE UDR OR A WARNING ABOUT FURTHER CRITICISM OF GISCARD TEND TO FIND THEMSELVES STYMIED BY THE LACK OF PURPOSE WHICH SUCH A WARNING MIGHT HAVE. THE UDR, AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING, HAS NO PLACE TO GO OUTSIDE OF THE GOVERNMENT COALITION. GISCARD HAS SCORED A PERSONAL POLITICAL POINT. IT DIDN'T COST HIM VERY MUCH, IT MAKES HIM LOOK A BIT TOUGHER THAN HE HAS FOR A WHILE, HE HAD TO DO IT BECAUSE SANGUI HAD GONE TOO FAR-- BUT THE FIRING WILL PROBABLY BE INEFFECTIVE. SANGUINETTI OUTSIDE THE GOVERNMENT CAN BE EXPECTED TO BE A VOLUBLE AS HE WAS IT IT.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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